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ABSTRACT

Scholars of Chicano history have been negligent in using oral history as a research tool whereas colleagues in other disciplines (e.g., Manuel Gomio, Paul Taylor, Oscar Lewis, and Americo Paredes) have used the technique extensively. The growing list of oral history projects since the early 1970's argues well for the greater use of oral history collections in writing on Chicano folklore, immigration, farm labor, political movements, and border history. However, a brief survey of history texts on the lower Rio Grande Valley reveals a striking neglect of Chicano history in the 20th century even though the history of this minority antedates that of the Anglos, and the bulk of the population is Chicano. Yet works by Lyle Brown, Devra Anne Weber, George N. Green, and Ricardo Romo show the type of Chicano information that can be gathered. Interviews conducted between 1976 and the present provide eye witness accounts of ranching, the medical profession, Mexican Revolution, border turmoil, migrations, ethnic relations, and social, economic, and political aspects of life in the lower Rio Grande Valley since 1900. These pioneering efforts in using oral history must be increased so that a more comprehensive account can be written about all aspects of Chicano experiences. (NQA)

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ORAL HISTORY--A TOOL FOR THE STUDY OF CHICANO HISTORY IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY OF TEXAS

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ORAL HISTORY--A TOOL FOR THE STUDY OF CHICANO HISTORY
IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY OF TEXAS

Scholars of Chicano history have been negligent in the use of oral history as a research tool. This fact becomes obvious when one compares the use of the tool in the study of other minorities. Even in writing the history of the Anglos, historians have not neglected to use the tool as the works of Allen Nevins and Studs Terkel testify.

A brief glance at Manfred Waserman's Bibliography on Oral History Collections shows a dearth of Chicano history utilizing the oral history approach. In fact, it contains more references to the use of the interview technique in Mexican history than in Chicano history. Specific citations to the use of oral history in Mexican research are those by Lyle Brown, Eugenia Meyer, Alicia Olivera de Bonfil, James W. Wilke and Edna Monzon de Wilkie.[1] This bibliographical guide indicates that the use of the methodology for the Chicano past had not come of age by 1975.

Alan Meckler and Ruth McMullin in 1975 published a guide to oral history collections. Under the listing of Texas institutions, the guide notes four universities which have depositories on Chicano subjects. The four schools are Baylor University, North Texas State University, Texas A & M and the University of Texas at El Paso.[2] Smaller collections at other Texas institutions can be added to the list, but the Meckler and McMullin guide again point to limited resources in this area.

A more recent survey of literature in the field by Prof. Oscar Martinez deplores the fact that few publications on Chicano history have made use of oral history. He believes this to be due to the recent development of oral history

and the relatively few Chicano specialists prior to late 1960's.[3]

Prof. Martinez writes that the professional historian has been remiss in the use of oral history whereas colleagues in other disciplines have used the technique extensively. As early as the 1920's the Mexican anthropologist, Manuel Gomic, used it for his studies on Mexican labor migrations to the U.S. The same holds true for Paul Taylor in his research in Mexican and Chicano labor in the U.S. after World War I. During the post World War II era other scholars--Ernesto Galarza, Oscar Lewis, Americo Paredes and Stan Steiner--have utilized the tool in their research.[4] The professional historian would do well to learn from their pioneering efforts.

The growing list of oral history projects since the early 1970's in Texas and California as well as other states such as New Mexico, Utah and Colorado argue well for the greater use of oral history collections in writing on Chicano folklore, immigration, farm labor, political movements and border history.[5] Prof. Martinez's concluding observation bears repeating:

> Chicano Oral History is in its infancy. Although scholars and other writers have used oral interviews extensively as a research tool in Chicano communities, few works exist which are based principally on oral history. Established historians particularly have failed to capitalize on the potential of the tape recorder. Yet, there are indications that young scholars now entering the profession will systematically tap this important date-gathering technique. Institutionalized programs which have Chicano projects are relatively scarce; but some of the existing ones contain worthy collections.[6]

It is the purpose of this article to follow this admonition and apply it to Chicano history in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

A brief survey of history texts on the lower Rio Grande Valley reveal a striking neglect of Chicano history in the 20th century despite the fact that the history of this minority antedates that of the Anglos and that the bulk of the population is Chicano. The standard text by Lee Stambaugh and his wife, Lillian, is a good example of seeing 19th and 20th century history in the Valley as Anglo history. For instance, the authors describe the development of cattle

and agricultural industries as essentially an Anglo phenomena.[7] The same story is repeated for the building of the railroads during the early years of the current century. The authors base their findings on newspaper accounts and city commission minutes. Since these accounts are essentially Anglo, the story of the Chicano remains untold. Had the authors used oral history in the Chicano community, it would have become obvious that many of the above mentioned industries were made possible with Mexican labor and Mexican American owned enterprises. It is a good example, where oral history can fill gaps when the traditional written sources remain silent.

Another work that falls into the Stambaugh category is Dorothy Lee Pope's work. Her focus is more limited, covering the history of the area only from 1910-1930. She relies heavily on newspaper accounts and does use oral interviews, but interviews only with the Anglo segments of the community. The result is only a passing reference to the Chicano. It essentially becomes the history of the Anglo settlers and developers. When the Mexican is brought in, he frequently appears as a bandid.

Bicentennial projects and publications of the 1970's focused more on ethnic contributions to the nation's past and the lower Rio Grande Valley was no exception. Ann Reed Washington et al in their Roots by the River show a greater awareness of the Chicano heritage than have the previously mentioned writers. Although the major portion of the publication relates the story of Anglo settlers, developers and business people, the writers do not neglect the story of prominent Mexican American family businesses such as the Vela Ranch north of Edinburg and the Yturria Ranch near Raymondville. Similarly, Mexican Americans are treated in the business areas such as the Yturrias in banking, Carlos de la Garza in the grocery and printing business and the Hinojosa meat packing establishment in Mercedes. Even though the work is written for popular reading tastes, it does show a healthy sign of recognizing the Chicano past.

Some of the above cited sources have used oral history accounts in a very limited way. The fact that the works treat the history of the Anglo elites, and interviews were usually done only with this group, results in a neglect of the Chicano experiences. On the other hand, Lyle Brown in an article on the use of oral history in study of Crystal City and the La Raza Unida shows the type of Chicano information that can be gathered.[9] His tapes are available at Baylor University Oral History Collection.

The invaluable help that oral history technique can provide becomes very evident in Devra Anne Weber's research on Mexican agricultural workers in the Imperial Valley and the Los Angeles area. Her approach to study of strikes in the area from 1928 to 1934 was to let ten strikers tell their stories, rather than completely rely on newspaper accounts which sided with the growers. Among her significant findings through the use of interviews were: (a) a more realistic number of people actually involved in strikes, (b) political, social, economic and religious concerns, (c) family backgrounds, (d) relations among Mexican workers and relations with other ethnic groups, (e) displacement of Mexican workers with Anglo workers, (f) relationship between idealogy of strikers and idealogy of labor leaders and (g) structure of unions and strike activities. In addition to interviews the author used letters of Carey McWilliams, letters and pamphlets in the UCLA library and government publications. A study of her findings makes it obvious that the written records could never provide the information gained through interviewing the ten strikers.[10]

Other examples of the use of interview techniques in the study of Chicano strikes are investigations by George N. Green into the International Ladies Garment Workers Union in Texas from 1930-1970. The author's major sources are newspaper and labor reviews. The oral history tool is of secondary importance, but even in this role it still provides information not available in the printed sources.[11] The story is very much the same in Victor B. Nelson Cisneros's study

of the pecan sheller in the 1930's in San Antonio.[12]

In a somewhat different vein is Ricardo Romo's use of the interviews to ascertain how certain Mexican families came to the U.S., how they were able to secure jobs and how they were helped by Texas Rangers to cross illegally.[13] Needless to say, the last mentioned item will not readily be found in Ranger archives, but it is information that can be captured through the taped interview.

The aforementioned examples of the use of oral history in looking at the Chicano past are sufficient to show what can be done. These pioneering efforts in the use of oral history must be increased so that a more comprehensive account can be written about all aspects of the Chicano experiences. In keeping with this aspiration I now wish to focus on the lower Rio Grande Valley in South Texas and show the value of the oral history approach in studying the Chicano's past.

The following interviews are ones I have done between 1976 to the present. These are life stories of five individuals, with some eight to nine hours of interviews with each one. All interviews are available at the Pan American University Learning Resource Center for public use without restrictions. The stories of the five individuals are really interviews with an elite group and this note of caution must be kept in mind when listening to their observations.

The oral history venture started as a bicentennial project, initiated by the Governor's Committee on Aging in 1976. The result was the publication of the life stories of some twenty-five senior citizens in the state of Texas. Among the list of senior citizens selected for interviewing in the south Texas area was Dr. Octavio Garcia from McAllen.[14] What was of particular interest to me in this man's life was his participation in the Mexican Revolution and migration to the U.S. It was for these reasons that I recommended that Dr. Garcia be selected as one of twenty-five persons to be interviewed for the bicentennial project. After listening to the doctor's story, I never regretted my decision.

The story of Dr. Garcia begins around the turn of the century with his

boyhood years in Mier across the river from Roma, Texas. His early teen age years were spent in Saltillo where he attended the Ateneo. His account up to 1915, when at the age of sixteen he migrated to the U.S., provides interesting insights into life in Mier and Saltillo. The educational experiences at the Ateneo were a real eye opener for it was here under the influence of one of the philosophy teachers that he confronted the social and economic problems facing Mexico under the Porfiriato. In the narration he also notes his family's close relationship with Francisco Madero, the leader of the Revolution of 1910. This was not the case with the arrival of President Venustiano Carranza on the scene in 1914, when the family caught in the partisan revolutionary fights migrated to their ranch near Falfurrias, Texas.

After a brief stay on his father's ranch, he went to St. Louis College (the future St. Mary's University in San Antonio) to improve his English. During the 1920's he attended St. Louis University Medical School where he completed his work by 1930.

One of the most valuable portions of the interview is his description of the many discriminatory practices he had to face as a doctor in McAllen. He was successful in gradually eliminating these practices and introducing more professional standards into the hospital--such as adequate record keeping and the use of an X-ray machine, which his wife, a trained nurse, operated. In short, for Chicano history the oral account is valuable in giving a picture of life in a border town and on a ranch during the early 1900's. Especially useful are the doctor's comments on the Mexican Revolution and his experiences with discrimination at the McAllen hospital. The latter alone makes the interview worthwhile, since it vividly demonstrates the serious problems Chicanos faced from the 1930's to the 1960's.[15]

As noted earlier, historical accounts of the Valley tend to neglect the Chicano contribution to the ranching industry. If there is recognition, it is

given to the settlers of the Escandon era during the 18th century but after 1848 it is viewed mainly as an Anglo industry. The stories of Esteban Garcia and Ramon Guerra provide evidence for Chicano contributions to ranching after 1848.

Both men trace their family ancestries back to the settlers of the Escandon era. The Guerra family resided on the Texas side whereas Garcia lived in Camargo but was forced to leave and move to a ranch on the U.S. side. The Garcias supported the Pres. Porfirio Diaz and there was no room for such sentiments after 1910. In fact, the family suffered the loss of extensive land holdings in Mexico.[16]

Both accounts provide information on ranch life in south Texas. The Garcia story depicts life first in Camargo and shows the close ties with the sister town of Rio Grande City. Since relatives and friends lived on both sides of the river and since there was no migration restriction, the two communities saw themselves as one large settlement. The close ties between the two towns were threatened by restrictive immigration measures starting in 1917.[17]

The Garcia family was an heir to porcion #98, an original land grant dating back to 1767. After leaving Camargo, the family moved to its ranch near Falfurrias. The Guerra family lived on a ranch some twenty-five miles north of Edinburg. Both interviews depict the isolated conditions of ranch life prior to the arrival of mechanization. The ranchers spent much time discussing the business of running a ranch, such as working conditions, breeding of cattle, improvements of ranch land and the rancher's role as a patron, which aided many of their Chicano workers to survive hard times.[18] For instance, the business aspects of the Guerra interview reveals the selling of cattle to Lucio Blanco's army in Tamaulipas, which supported Venustiano Carranza in his struggle to overthrow Pres. Victoriano Huerta. The Garcia story relates his efforts in developing the Zebu breed of cattle.

Other interesting aspects of the interviews concern Mr. Guerra's entering the grocery business in McAllen and his election to the city commission. It is during his term as a city commissioner in the 1930's that the paths of Dr. Octavio

Garcia and Guerra crossed. When the doctor was complaining about the discriminatory practices at the McAllen hospital, it was Guerra whom the doctor approached for help. The effort proved futile since the commissioner let it be known that this is the way the Anglo's do business and the doctor needs to reconcile himself to this harsh reality. The "fighting doctor" was not about to accept this as a definitive solution.[19]

Esteban Garcia also had other interests besides ranching. One was his close association with Mexican political leaders. These associations were made possible by his dealings in cattle and horses with Mexican political figures including members of both PRM (later PRI) and opposition parties such as PAN. Garcia retained his Mexican citizenship and this made him eligible to participate in Mexican politics. He became an active participant in the campaign of Juan Andres Almazan in 1940. His siding with Almazan reflects his earlier Porfiriato convictions.[20]

The concluding portions of the two interviews treat the reaction of the two men to the Chicano movements starting in the 1960's. Both come from a conservative background and feel ill at ease with the word Chicano. They are convinced that through education the Mexican Americans can improve their lot in life without espousing "radical" Chicano causes. The fear of radicalism in the Chicano movement is very evident in the remarks of Garcia when he comments on La Casita farmworker strike during the late 1960's and La Raza Unida. Having been a resident of Rio Grande City since the 1960's, he witnessed the strike. He opposed it and advised the Catholic Church in the Valley not to become involved because the issues were purely socio-economic and alien to the Church's mission. He also felt that workers' demand were exhorbitant and the Rangers were justified in arresting the strikers since they were destroying private property. Garcia's defense of the Rangers is not borne out by subsequent court decisions, which found them in the wrong.[21]

One can easily assume that the opinions of the two men regarding the Chicano movements and the strike of the farmworkers were views widely shared by other ranchers. It is an elitest view of successful ranchers who saw in these movements a threat to their economic interests. To have such a view on tape is valuable to a researcher since it helps to explain the difficulties that Chicanos faced in improving the lot of their people in general.

An entirely different picture emerges in the discussion with Leo J. Leo, the long time political jefe of La Joya near McAllen, Texas. His ancestry was a mixture of Mexican and Anglo dating back to the days of the war between the United States and Mexico. His earliest memories go back to the 1920's during which time he relates interesting aspects of life and education in La Joya. He notes the harsh discrimination Chicano students faced in schools. This discrimination continued into the 1930's when Leo attended the junior college in Edinburg, the forerunner of Pan American University. One unforgettable incident at the junior college was his successful campaign to elect a Mexican American queen. When school officials saw that in all likelihood she would win, the girl had to withdraw from the race and settle for runner-up position.[22]

The 1920's and particularly the 1930's were not easy times for Leo since he was born into a family of limited means. The family was especially hard hit by the depression years during which time Leo entered the CCC and later secured employment in New Deal Projects. Here the interview is very valuable since it provides a better from the bottom view of the depression era than do the previously noted interviews. His comments on the hard times in Mission and McAllen show that Chicanos who needed New Deal programs the most did not receive the benefits that the Anglo segment received. Irene Ledesma in a master's thesis treating Chicanos in McAllen from 1933 to 1936 reached the same conclusion.[23] The economic hardships that Leo suffered convinced him of the need for economic independence that he must achieve before he could enter politics to improve the

deplorable conditions of his people. Even his brief fling at teaching in Zapata County did not guarantee this economic independence. It was not until the post World War II years when he entered the grocery business that he achieved his greatly desired economic security.[24]

Post World War II years offered Leo political opportunities that were his first love. He was convinced that the Chicanos coming out of WW II were more conscious of the need to fight for their rights. This was a different person than the one who had joined LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens), who according to Leo did not want to rock the boat. The new Chicano was the one with a GI Bill, who joined the GI Forum, PASSO (Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organizations) and Kennedy Clubs. With La Joya as his political power base, he challenged the Anglo leadership in Hidalgo County and Spanish surnamed patrones, who were tools in the hands of the Anglo political king pins. One such patron whom Leo challenged was E. B. Reyna of La Joya. The aspiring political leader achieved success in the 1960's when he was able to incorporate the town of La Joya and be elected mayor.[25]

The narration of these political events exposes much political corruption, especially in the use of the poll tax and voting. In fact, the political candidate, who could provide payment of the poll tax for his supporters, stood a very good chance to win. The use of the paper ballot made it convenient to use political pressure. Leo is convinced that the introduction of the voting machine was one of the greatest reforms since it kept the vote secret. This meant one could vote against the political boss without fearing economic reprisals. The court decision that the poll tax is unconstitutional cannot be considered a small reform either.[26]

Leo's political power base extended beyond the confines of La Joya. For awhile, he served as a public notary and helped file citizenship papers for many of his clients. Many cases involved children of repatriados in the 1930's who had been born in the U.S. but were forced to return to Mexico during the depression

years. Such a service made for loyal political supporters.[27]

Another area in which he served his community was his membership on boards of directors overseeing Great Society poverty programs of the 1960's.[28] Leo as a member of these boards spoke out in behalf of the economically depressed. In so doing he was able to extent his political power base since he was able to deliver services that many of these people had never received before, such as jobs, improved housing and legal aid.[29]

His comments on his membership on the board of the Associated City and County Economic Development Corporation (ACCEDC) gives his version of the problems the agency faced and especially the problems that Elisio Sandoval, the director of the program, created. This eventually led to indictments, convictions and the demise of ACCEDC. Leo himself spent a brief time in jail for contempt because the judge found his behavior in the court room unbecoming. Despite this inglorious ending, Leo had served a segment of the community, whose needs were frequently neglected in the political process. But doing so, Leo had become a patron, the very thing he fought when he began his political career. Toward the end of his life he was called "the patron of La Joya", a title he did not cherish.[30]

The mayor's political fight for the underdog also was very evident in the La Casita farmworkers strike. Aside from Leo, there were few leaders who openly supported the demands of the strikers. Leo was very critical of LULAC which ran articles in the newspapers condemning the strike. He had no sympathy for the position expressed by the rancher from Rio Grande City--namely Esteban Garcia. He also criticized the federal judge, Reynaldo Garza, who, he claimed, was dragging his feet in handling the complaints of the farmworkers against the Texas Rangers. The strikers claimed that the Rangers were interfering with the workers' right to strike.[31] His critical observations also extended to a number of clergymen, who did not side with the farmworkers. He did find much to praise in the remarks of Bishop Humberto Medeiros of Brownsville, who reminded his people that workers

had a right to unionize and strike to gain improved wages and working conditions. The pronouncement did not sit well with the growers, some of whom were Catholics.[32] The feelings of Esteban Garcia that the Church was meddling in an area which was alien to its mission must have been a sentiment that received widespread support among the growers.

The Leo J. Leo tape is a valuable study of Chicano politics in the Valley. It is part of the broader picture of political power gradually passing from the Anglos to Chicano political leaders. In this process, which is still going on, Leo can certainly be classified as one of the pioneers.

All the foregoing interviews involve persons of Mexican ancestry, who had played important roles in the South Texas area. The next interview takes a different approach since it is a look at the Chicano through Anglo eyes. It is the story of John R. Peavey, who served as a law enforcement official along the border from World War I to 1946.

The Peavey interviews cover Valley history from his arrival in Brownsville in 1905 to his retirement from the Border Patrol in 1946. His family was from Massachusetts and came to the Valley after a brief stay in St. Louis. His coming is part of the Anglo migration to South Texas during the pre-World War I days.

The early years of Peavey in the Valley were spent as a worker on a sugar cane "plantation" and as a cowboy. Both occupations afforded him opportunities for close associations with Chicano workers and Mexican migrants. The interviews covering his part of his life are rich in detail describing the lot of a worker on a ranch and a sugar cane farm.[33]

Much time in the interview is spent on stories depicting "frontier justice," which frequently was administered by trigger happy citizens. Peavey was a witness to a number of these killings committed in the name of "frontier justice". In fact, he was quick to add that he would not be relating his life story, had he not been quicker on the trigger than his opponents.[34] Many of these murders

are related in his Echoes from the Rio Grande.[35] The taped interviews provide many details that the author left unreported in his published memoirs.

The Peavey accounts of "frontier justice" add support to those writers who argue that much of the so-called lawlessness along the border during the pre-World War I days was actually "social banditry." In short, individuals took matters into their own hands because law enforcement agencies and the judicial system proved to be incapable or unwilling to provide justice.

The Peavey story collaborates the aforementioned accounts of political corruption in the Valley from 1905 to the time he ran for sheriff in Hidalgo County in 1946. As a member of the border patrol and various law enforcement agencies, he had many opportunities to observe corruption first hand. The use of the poll tax was an important device in this corruption and he attributes this to his defeat in the sheriff race in 1946. In addition, he is very critical of the patron system.[36]

His work as an army scout during the World War I era afforded him many opportunities to observe first hand the so-called bandit raids along the border. He held the deserters from rebel armies in Mexico responsible for the raids. In the lower Valley he points to Lucio Blanco of Tamaulipas and his supporters as the culprits. Peavey does not admit that socio-economic causes may have been important factors in these raids. Rather he finds an innate criminal tendency in the Mexican character which for him explains the cause of these raids.[37]

He is convinced that the U.S. army units due to inexperience were not an effective force in patroling the area and ending the "bandit" raids. Since Peavey served as a special Texas Ranger agent, his view may be colored. Adam Medvecky, a member of a U.S. army cavalry at the time, offers a different version. According to him, the main cause for bandit raids was the need for food and horses and the Texas Rangers were nowhere to be found when "bandit" raids were going on.[38]

It goes without saying that each interviewee has his own ax to grind but the anecdotes related by these two gentlemen do offer insights into events that are highly significant in border history from 1910 to 1916.

Another important function as a scout for the U.S. army was to gather information during World War I on revolutionary groups along the border, especially as these groups may relate to anti-American activities and German sabotage. According to Peavey, this meant the reporting to higher authorities about the activities of strangers in the area. The purpose was to track down German sympathizers and spies. All together there were some eight men with close ties to the Chicano community in his scouting unit to observe all "strange" activities from Brownsville to Rio Grande City.[39]

Shortly after World War I the army scout became a member of the U.S. border patrol, which was established to enforce immigration restrictions. These became more common place with the passage of the Literacy Act of 1917, the first act to limit Mexican migration to the U.S. The interviews covering the 1920's show how ineffective the enforcement of immigration restriction was along the border. First the Act was waived when growers complained about the shortage of farm labor during and after the war. Even when the Act was in force, lack of adequate personnel made it very difficult to enforce. Up to 1921 there were only eight mounted guards to patrol the district from Brownsville to Rio Grande City, a distance of some 160 miles. In 1924 more personnel was added to the patrol and the Brownsville sector extended no further than Hidalgo across the river from Reynosa. Yet, this did not resolve the problem of enforcement as Mexican migrants in the 1920's arrived in ever greater numbers. As Peavey points out, arrested illegal aliens were deported only to be back within twenty-four hours. His observations pointed to one inescapable conclusion--the U.S. immigration office was not about to enforce an act that could deprive growers of a steady cheap labor supply. Nowhere does this become more evident than when he remarks that it was

not unusual for the border patrol to be given three months furlough from their duties at a time.[40] One is tempted to suspect that the furlcughs may have been especially plentiful during the harvest seasons.

Special note in the Peavey tapes should be taken regarding his comments on smuggling. Much of the interview is devoted to stories on smuggling tequila during the 1920's, alien smuggling and bringing in Mexican goods without paying duties. Ever since the Rio Grande became an international boundary in 1848, smuggling, as in any border area, has become an important aspect of the Valley's history. The story of Peavey adds an important chapter to this aspect of the regions's post.[41]

What has been presented up to now is some of the raw material for writing the Chicano history in the lower Valley. Much more raw material must be gathered such as the accounts of Mexican immigrants in the 20th century, whose complete story cannot be told without the tool of oral history. Graduate students at our university have already utilized the tool in their master thesis. The previously cited example of Irene Ledesma is a case in point. Currently Armando Alonzo is completing is master thesis, entitled "A Social and Economic History of the Mexican Community in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, 1900-1930", which makes extensive use of oral history in conjunction with the consultation of county records and newspapers. Having worked with these graduate students, I have become convinced that the story could not have been told without the use of oral history.

In summation, the five gentlemen who told me their life history have contributed to understanding the Chicano experience in the lower Valley area. Here we have eye witness accounts of ranching, the medical profession, Mexican Revolution, border turmoil, migrations, ethnic relations, social, economic and political aspects of life in the Valley since 1900. One may criticize the viewpoints expressed as elitist. I agree, but I am also reminded of Jose Vasconcelos, the philosopher of Mexico, who felt it necessary to subtitle his memoirs, La Flama,

"los de arriba en la Revolucion" after Mariano Azuela had written his classic Los de abajo.

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ENDNOTES

[1]Manfred Waserman, Bibliography on Oral History (New York: The Oral History Association, 1975), pp. 5-48.

[2]Alan Meckler and Ruth McMullin, Oral History Collections (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1975), pp. 228-330.

[3]Oscar J. Martinez, "Chicano Oral History Status and Prospects," Aztlan XI (Spring, Summer, Fall 1978): 119-121. Also see Rolando A. Juarez, "What the Tape Recorder has Created: A Broadly-Based Exploration into Contemporary Oral History Practice," Aztlan VII (Spring 1976): 99-118.

[4]Ibid., p. 121.

[5]Ibid., pp. 121-125

[6]Ibid., p. 125.

[7]Lee J. and Lillian J. Stambaugh, The Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas (Austin, Tx.: The Jenkins Publishing Co., 1974), for example see Chapters VII (pp. 182-203) and X (pp. 204-230). A more general text is Paul Hargan's Great River. The Rio Grande in North American History, Vol. II (N.Y. Rinehart & Co., Inc., 1954). Hargan makes no use of oral history and has only a few passing references to the lower Rio Grande Valley.

[8]Dorothy Lee Pope, Rainbow Era on the Rio Grande (Brownsville, Tx.: Springman-King Co., 1971).

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[13]Ricardo Romo, "Response to Mexican Immigration, 1910-1930," Aztlan VI (Spring, Fall 1975): pp. 173-194.

[14]Donna Bearden and Jamie Frucht, The Texas Sampler (Austin, Tx.: Governor's Committee on Aging, 1976), pp. 126-139.

[15]Octavio Garcia, Oral Interviews with Dr. Octavio Garcia. Typed annotated index of a tape recorded series of interviews conducted by Hubert J. Miller, professor of history at Pan American University (Edinburg, Tx.: Pan American University, 1976) 34 pp. Also see writer's article in Octavio G. Ballesteros, ed., Preparing Teachers for Bilingual Education: Basic Readings (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, Inc., 1979), pp. 171-184.

[16]Esteban Garcia, Oral Interviews with Esteban Garcia, recorded series of interviews conducted by Hubert J. Miller, professor of history at Pan American University (Edinburg, Tx.: Pan American University, 1978) and Ramon Guerra, Oral Interviews with Ramon Guerra, recorded series of interviews conducted by Hubert J. Miller, professor of history at Pan American University (Edinburg, Tx.: Pan American University, 1978).

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid.

[22]Leo J. Leo, Oral Interviews with Leo J. Leo, recorded series of interviews conducted by Hubert J. Miller, professor of history at Pan American University (Edinburg, Tx.: Pan American Univeristy, 1980).

[23]Irene Ledesma, "The New Deal Public Works Programs and Mexican-Americans in McAllen, Texas, 1933-36" (M.A. thesis, Pan American University, 1977).

[24]Leo, Oral Interviews . . . . .

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Other Boards of Directors on which Leo J. Leo served included Comprehensive Employment Training Act, Community Action Program, Hidalgo County Housing Authority and Texas Rural Legal Aid.

[29]Leo, Oral Interviews . . . . .

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid.

[33]John R. Peavey, Oral Interviews with John R. Peavey, recorded series of interviews conducted by Hubert J. Miller, professor of history at Pan American University (Edinburg, Tx.: Pan American University, 1982).

[34]Ibid.

[35]John R. Peavey, Echoes from the Rio Grande (Brownsville, Tx: Springman-King Co., 1963).

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Adam Medvecky, Oral Interview with Adam Medvecky, a recorded interview conducted by Armando Ruben Ramos (Edinburg, Tx.: Pan American University, 1978).

[39]Peavey, Oral Interviews . . . . .

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid.